

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figures 1-3; each of the figures has been amended to include a "Prior Art" legend.

Attachment: Submittal of Drawing Replacement Sheets

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Claim Amendments

The Applicant has amended claim 36 to correct a typographical error; the claim is dependent from claim 27, rather than claim 26.

2.) Examiner Objection – Drawings

The Examiner objected to Figures 1-3 of the drawings on the basis that they should include a “Prior Art” legend. The Applicant submits herewith drawing replacement sheets with the suggested amendment to Figures 1-3.

3.) Restriction Requirement

The Examiner asserted that the claims are “directed to more than one species of the generic invention” and specified that an election should be made to prosecute Species I (corresponding to “at least” claims 29-34 and 41-47), Species II (corresponding to “at least” claims 31-33, 35, 41, 44-46 and 48), or Species III (corresponding to “at least” claims 36, 37 and 49-50). **The Applicants traverse the restriction requirement.**

First, claim 36 has been amended to correct a typographical error; the claim is now dependent from claim 27, rather than 26, which was previously cancelled.

Secondly, the Examiner’s restriction requirement appears to not have a proper basis as none of the claim groupings includes an independent claim. The claims consist of two groups of claims: Group I, comprising claims 27-39 and Group II, comprising claims 40-52. The Examiner’s restriction requirement notes that claims 27 and 40 are generic, with which the Applicant agrees. Claims 27 and 40, however, contain analogous claim limitations and, therefore, are not patentably distinct. Thus, claims 27 and 40 are entitled to prosecution in the same application, as well as the claims dependent therefrom.

If the Examiner were to assert a restriction requirement to either of Group I or Group II, as identified by Applicant, the Applicant would elect Group 1, albeit with traverse as the claims of Group II are directed to an apparatus that performs functions

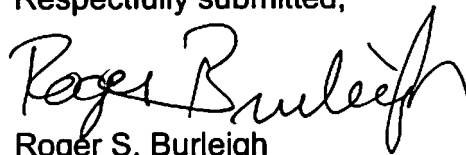
analogous to the functions recited by the method claims of Group I and, as noted, are not patentably distinct.

CONCLUSION

The Applicant requests that the Examiner either withdraw or clarify the basis for the asserted restriction requirement.

The Applicant requests a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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